

## 'Blue Peter' appeal captures her teddy...



● WHEN Daddy is Director of the Society chosen to administer this year's "Blue Peter" appeal and the BBC children's programme is your favourite, then it makes parting with your favourite teddy just about — well — bearable. Here little Emily Yeo, aged seven, donates her toy to Mrs Pauline Ross, of the Society's Canterbury Spastics Shop, accompanied by brother Jonathan, aged nine, friend Charlotte Brown, seven, and her father Tim.

## ...and the imagination of TV viewers

WITHIN a week of Tim Yeo's arrival as Director of The Spastics Society, discussions were taking place with the BBC which led to the Society being chosen to administer this year's "Blue Peter" appeal. Although the appeal is not being made on behalf of the Society, the vast bulk of the proceeds will be used for projects designed to help cerebral palsied people of all ages, many of which are directly associated with the Society, and also to prevent the incidence of handicap.

Said Tim: "It seems to me that this is the most exciting bit of publicity that the Society has ever had. This TV programme is watched by a high proportion of children aged four to 12 — certainly my children always watch it and it is respected by them.

"They will be made aware of the problems of the handicapped in a way they

never have before. The projects are to help the handicapped live in the community, a conception which the Society passionately supports, and to reduce the incidence of handicap so the long term benefits for both the disabled and the Society are incalculable.

"You only have to ask a child about Cambodia, Blue Peter's appeal last

year administered by Ox-fam, and they remember all about it.

"The appeal target is £1 million, and the projects which it will support are to supply equipment to every one of our schools and centres such as a video recorder or in some instances a micro-computer for teaching.

"Every local group and there are 196 of them will receive £100 of equipment and in addition we will be able to complete a new Fokus housing scheme two years earlier than would otherwise have been possible.

"Bungalows enabling the disabled to live outside an institution will be built in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and a similar scheme undertaken in Wales. Funds will also

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## 'Buck passed' charge on baby report

TIM Yeo, the Society's Director has slammed the Government, publicly accusing it of "hypocrisy", "complacency" and "buck passing" over its White Paper response to the perinatal mortality report produced by the Commons' Social Services Select Committee.

And he called the decision to debate the subject on Friday, December 5, just 36 hours after the Paper's publication: "An outrageous and deliberate attempt to stifle a proper airing of the subject" because MPs traditionally leave the Commons on that day to travel to their constituencies.

"The whole reply is a buck-passing exercise designed so that the Government can evade its responsibilities to the nation's babies and unborn children," he said.

"The White Paper merely draws the attention of the area health authorities to more

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## A play for Christmas

The magic and mystery of Christmas is captured in this picture of Jaqui Barber, aged 14, who is in the Vth form at the Society's Thomas Delarue School, at Tonbridge, Kent. Jaqui and her fellow pupils are performing the Wakefield cycle of mystery plays this Christmas.

The Wakefield mystery plays were originally performed in the streets of the City in the 14th century. This year the school is performing "The Offering of the Magi" and "The Flight into Egypt" from the cycle. In the picture below, Mary, played by Jaqui, and Joseph by Paul Hancock, are with Angela Taylor, Richard Mayson and Zoe Waddington as the shepherds.



## Lawyers fight for rights of disabled

ALREADY eight cases are in the hands of top flight lawyers as a result of The Spastics Society and four other leading charities banding together to fight for the rights of the disabled, and consider legal action against local authorities over the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

In the six weeks that Ursula Keeble, a social worker and author, has been investigating local authorities who may be acting illegally in relation to Section 2 of the Act, up to 20 queries a day are being handled and some Directors of Social Services are banning their staff from speaking to her.

Under Section 2 local authorities are required to assess need, if they don't

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## Frankly — 1980 has been a bleak year

LOOKING back over the pages of Spastics News for the year, a rather gloomy picture emerges. The Spastics Society was caught in the grim jaws of recession and inflation, and we were reporting again and again on cut-backs, deficits, and that crippling burden of

VAT borne so unfairly by us, and other caring charities.

As well as the financial problems there were also the particularly nasty reports of vandalism, and attacks on Society centres for the handicapped, and our constant worry was that by reporting them we put the same idea into the

minds of other morons.

But, fortunately, amidst the gloom there was a great deal of hope.

In the stories about the handicapped people who have achieved so much by their amazing efforts to overcome difficulties.

In the stories about the fund raisers who still manage to find new ideas to

persuade money out of the pockets of the public and into the collecting tins.

In the stories of the way in which the Society is fighting back to preserve services in a year which has probably been one of the most difficult in its history. And will continue fighting in 1981, especially to persuade the government that

milking the Society of £220,000 in VAT in the current financial year alone is a scandalous affair, and relief must be granted forthwith. That will be a battle worth reporting.

Yes, a bleak year, but still a lot to be thankful for. Have a happy Christmas, and hope for better time in 1981.



# Christmas message from the Director

FOR most of us Christmas is a time for families, a time for the renewal of old beliefs and a time of hope for the future.

Everyone connected with The Spastics Society, in whatever capacity, is part of a much larger family. It is a family which, like all others, has its strengths and its weaknesses, its joys and its griefs. It is a far flung family whose

members are involved in many different tasks and responsibilities.

Above all, we are one family, dedicated to the same noble objectives. The unity of this family is our most important asset, for it is only by working together that we can accomplish the great work on which we are all engaged.

Looking ahead, 1981 is the International Year of Disabled People, of which more will be written elsewhere. The

Society enters 1981 with the same pioneering and determined spirit which inspired our founders back in 1952. As a seventeenth century lover wrote:

"He either fears his fate too much,

Or his desserts are small,  
Who dares not put it to the touch,

To gain or lose it all."

Let us not fear in 1981 to put it to the touch.

A very happy Christmas to you all.

TIM YEO

## Have you a winning way with words?

HANDICAPPED men, women and children of all ages who have an urge or a special talent to express themselves by writing poetry or prose in the form of essays or stories will have a chance to win recognition in The Spastics Society's 11th annual literary contest.

The contest opens on Thursday, January 1, and closing date for entries is three months later on Tuesday, April 14.

Categories are as follows:

**Schoolchildren:** Up to and including 11 years. Entries not to exceed 1,000 words. Prizes: Winner £15. Second £10.

**Adolescents:** Age 12 to 17 years of age. Entries not to exceed 2,000 words.

Prizes: Winner £50. Second £25.

**Adults:** Age 18 years and over. Prizes: Winner £50. Second £25.

**Poetry:** No guide to length may be given and any verse form may be used.

**Schoolchildren up to and including 12 years of age.** Prizes: Winner £15. Second £10. Teenagers and adults aged 13 years and over. Prizes: Winner £50. Second £25.

It is not obligatory, but would be helpful, if entries from those aged 12 and over could be typed.

If you cannot manage the actual typing or writing yourself, the rules allow for you to ask someone to write down or type your story, article, or poem as dictated by you.

Write for full details and an entry form to: Mrs Nina Heycock, 35 Harrington Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 4JT.

NB: It is regretted that last year's first prize winners of a particular section are ineligible to enter for the same section this year, but can send in an entry for another category in which they have not previously won a prize.

## Mr Peter Jones

PETER Jones, who had been working for Top Ten Promotions Ltd for 19 years in both a voluntary and official capacity, has died at the age of 54.

He was regional manager for the southern half of England after joining Top Ten in 1972 full time and was known to hundreds of collectors.

Living in New Addington he also had very close connections with the Society's Coombe Farm Centre and had been a dedicated fund-raiser for it.

Mr Jones left a widow, two sons and a daughter and his funeral was attended by Geoffrey Arter, Director of Top Ten, and Alap Skirvin, Sales Executive.

## Baby report

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than 100 of the 152 recommendations in the report without providing a directive on priorities. Not a single penny has been allocated for the implementation of the recommendations — thus the Government is refusing to take any responsibility for their implementation.

"Paragraph 22 of the Government's reply states that more equipment would reduce the incidence of handicap, but where is the money for it? It has also refused to establish minimum standards of obstetric and neonatal care although it agrees that the greatest scope for improvement lies in eliminating regional and social class variations."

Mr Yeo stressed that the Society would continue to fight to ensure that needless death and handicapping of babies would be reduced.

Although the White Paper welcomed the report and accepted many of the recommendations it expressed anxiety about it raising "unrealistic expectations" about how far and how fast the recommendations could achieve reductions sought in perinatal death and handicap.

It emphasises that considerable progress had been and is still being made in improving the figures on mortality — the way forward could best be achieved by a sustained effort by all concerned with the subject. A health circular would shortly be issued by the Department of Health and Social Security to the National Health Service drawing particular attention to recommendations which concern authorities and also writing to professional and other bodies.

About 40 recommendations were aimed at Government itself, two-thirds were either accepted, or being considered and particular importance was attached to the need for "humanising" ante-natal clinics and maternity wards.

The Reply ends firmly: "In the present economic circumstances there can be no question of providing yet further funds for the NHS. Nor does the Government believe that the Committee has established a case for earmarking funds or for obliging health authorities to make a substantial diversion of their funds to maternity and neonatal services at the expense of other priority groups such as the elderly and the handicapped."

## Stars say farewell to Monique



● Eddie and Monique Chapleo were presented with a carriage clock inscribed with the names of all the Stars Organisation for Spastics members when they said farewell at the SOS AGM.



● Tony Osbourne, Georgina Moon and Dickie Henderson at the AGM which was held in the Martini Rossi Suite on the 16th floor of New Zealand House.

MONIQUE Chapleo was a teenager growing up in Nice when she read an advertisement in the local paper, the Nice Matin, asking for girls to train as nurses in England.

That was over 20 years ago and today her English is perfect with just that slight lilt of a Gallic accent that enchants the hearer.

She exchanged the sun-soaked glamour of the French Riviera for the grim bleakness of a massive institution for the sub-normal in Yorkshire. But it was at the mental hospital that she was to meet the man who was to become her husband, Eddie Chapleo, who was also training as a nurse.

The couple nursed for a time in York and then moved to Chelmsford in Essex running a home for the local authority.

### Wakes Hall

It was while they were there that they heard of the unique centre where they were to spend the next 14 years. Wakes Hall had just been opened by the Stars Organisation for Spastics, and when the Chapleo's agreed to take the posts of Warden and Matron it meant that their bosses were not nameless bureaucrats and faceless hospital boards, but household names and famous

faces from the world of entertainment.

In those days Wakes Hall was home for 17 people whose ages ranged from 40 to 55 and all severely handicapped by cerebral palsy.

By then the Chapleo's already had a son, Stefan, aged six, and then Simone, now 14, arrived.

After a while the Chapleo's realised that, despite their children, Wakes Hall needed more young faces. However space was limited and funds even more so.

"We talked it over with the SOS and they agreed that we should go ahead and expand." The problem, as always, was money for by then the SOS was committed to opening another home in South London, Good Neighbours House. So the Chapleo's decided to raise the money themselves and with the stars blessing made a start. They did it in three stages with the stars turning out in force for open days, fetes, and any other fund-raising venture the Chapleo's came up with.

As a result Wakes Hall is now home for 26 residents, the youngest of whom is 30. And the centre boasts a fine extension with added bedrooms and facilities.

Now the Chapleo's have taken on new roles running the Blackwater Hotel at West Mersea.

## Send your good wishes for a good cause

MAURA Taylor is The Spastics Society's Greetings Cards Co-ordinator and her aim is to have mantelpieces — throughout the country adorned with cards bought from the Society's local groups. And such is the wide variety of cards in the range that even with a fully laden shelf of season's greetings, the cards would not be duplicated.

"We've got just about every type of card you could wish for," Maura explained, "they come from Webb Ivory and there are beautiful fine art reproductions, traditional subjects, religious scenes, comic and cute pictures — every-

thing from snowmen to stage-coaches."

In addition to the cards which are sold in boxes and packets, Maura is also sending out catalogues of Christmas gifts to the groups.

"Again we are very proud of the range and quality of the goods, you can get anything from stocking fillers to pine kitchen pieces. One of the problems with catalogues is that sometimes the picture does not match the product — in fact we've had letters from people saying how pleased they've been that what they ordered was just as it had been illustrated.

"A lot of letters come in

with donations included with orders for cards. Sadly, sometimes an old age pensioner will write that they would love to buy the cards but they can't afford the postage to send them, so they send a donation to make up."

Despite the high cost of mailing a "Merry Christmas," Maura is masterminding the movement of several million cards, all in aid of the Society.

"We are also bringing out a spring catalogue for the groups so they can raise funds throughout the year. I shall also be very glad to hear from the groups if they have any comments about the cards and goods."

If you need cards and have no local group handy, you should write to Maura at headquarters including a stamped addressed envelope.

## Lawyers fight for disabled

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they are acting illegally, and once that need is assessed, not providing the service required on financial grounds alone, is also illegal. A number of authorities have used the excuse of central government cutbacks as a reason for withdrawing services.

Mrs Keeble is very concerned: "I fear the slow

erosion of Section 2, rather than deliberate injustice. When I write to local authorities I don't accuse them of acting illegally so much as suggest that (a) they restore a service and (b) waive the charges.

"Where social workers are forbidden to speak to me I suggest they get in touch with their local pressure group and make an approach that way. Inevitably many of the cases are being settled out of court in this fashion. When we go to law we want a test case on

each clause of the section, and we need cases where the people involved are prepared to commit themselves to going through with it.

"Of course by getting together, the charities are very powerful in terms of pressure and top lawyers are being briefed although it will be some time in the New Year before we are ready to go to court."

Mrs Keeble can be contacted at RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London, W1N 8AB, or ring 01-637-5400.



# Is the baby all right? If the answer is 'No' how do doctors break the news? Mothers tell their stories

"IS the baby all right?" That first anxious question nearly every mother asks after the birth of her baby is a crucial one, and sometimes, sadly, the answer must be "no." But how do members of the medical profession handle the difficult and delicate situation of breaking the news to parents that their baby is handicapped?

From reports received by The Spastics Society, it is clear that there are enormous and

worrying differences in the way that the medical profession tackles this crucial task. Sadly in many cases a lack of sensitivity imposes an extra and yet avoidable burden of agony on parents.

While the problems confronting doctors and nurses, many of whom are working under conditions of severe pressure, are appreciated, it must never be forgotten that for the parents of a newly-born baby to be told that their child is handicapped is a profoundly traumatic experi-

ence. Parents will remember that moment for the rest of their lives.

The Spastics Society is publicising, with the permission of those concerned, the experiences of a number of parents with the aim of alerting doctors, nurses and social workers to the need for a more sensitive, open and encouraging way of explaining to parents the nature of their child's handicap and ways of coming to terms with the situation.

## THE SAD MOMENT OF TRUTH

### 'You're lucky he wasn't a cabbage'



Mrs Christine Hancock

MRS Christine Hancock of Marigold Walk, Ashton, Bristol, has a 16-year-old son who is cerebral palsied. When she went into labour she was told that the X-rays had showed that the baby was an extended breech, but "not to worry."

The baby in fact arrived only 10 hours after labour had begun but she was not taken into the labour ward and no one checked on her regularly until two hours before the baby arrived.

"Then it seemed that everyone was appearing very quickly and it was obvious they were very concerned about the baby," she said.

"He was 7lb 13½oz and not 5lb as they suspected. I just feel I was not monitored enough up to the time of the birth. Afterwards, when the baby was in the world, the staff in the intensive care unit were great. The damage, however, was already done. All my husband and I were told was that the baby was in a coma due to a difficult birth."

After three weeks in hospital

Mr and Mrs Hancock brought the baby home and were told to treat him as a normal baby. "This was easier said than done. There was the problem of feeding. He took ages and had great difficulty in swallowing and sucking. Then as he grew there were the problems of holding things and sitting up — then, most of all, learning to walk, which he did at three years.

"Not until 18 months did the paediatrician tell me that I was lucky that Paul wasn't a cabbage since he had suffered a brain haemorrhage at birth. I was astounded. I thought my husband had been told about it and perhaps kept it from me, but this was not so.

"I left the hospital after that check-up feeling very low and hurt, mainly because of the way I was told. Especially waiting until the baby was 18 months old. I feel very strongly that doctors should inform patients straight after the birth if there is brain damage or whatever. After all, it is their child and one grows to accept the position much better than ages afterwards."

### 'We felt very bitter'

MRS Y., who wishes to remain anonymous, gave birth to a premature daughter. On her discharge she was told that the baby seemed to be normal and healthy, but that regular checks would have to be made.

For a year they lived in ignorance and became more and more worried as the little girl failed to reach the normal milestones. "However, we were always assured by the Health Visitor and Paediatrician that this was normal with premature babies."

When the child was 15 months old she was seen by a specialist who said: "You have been told what is wrong, haven't you?" Mrs Y. replied: "No." He said: "Well, because she had difficulties with breathing, your little girl was brain damaged at birth. She will need to see a physiotherapist and I will see her again in six months time."

Mrs Y. said he told her

little more than this "but as I was leaving I heard him talking to a medical student and heard him say 'spastic tendency'." Mrs Y. said that her mind spun round and she felt a profound sense of shock after having received so many reassurances for so long.

"It took my husband and I some time to come to terms with the knowledge that our little girl was handicapped, but it was in a way a relief to learn at last what was wrong. We felt very bitter that no one had been prepared to speak openly to us. No one had prepared us for the possibilities. We had been treated as if we had no intelligence and no emotions."

Together Mrs Y. and her husband battled on alone and pieced the picture together themselves. What helped was the love they had for their little girl.

"However, I do hope that one day all doctors will have the time and care to think of their patients as people. We receive excellent help and guidance now, but there was very little when we needed it most," she said.



MRS Mirlo Goss, of Castle Hill Close, Berkhamsted, Herts, gave birth to her son Nick in Nigeria. At nine months she started to have a "nagging" feeling that he should be trying to sit up. She took the baby to see a Scottish doctor who laughed at her worries.

"All you white women are the same. You all want your children to be the first to sit up. If you were a Nigerian you wouldn't get so anxious." After a somewhat frivolous conversation and some laughter, he agreed to examine the child. She saw his face change and he said seriously "You're right, you know, I think he's spastic."

The family returned to England with Nick where after hospital tests, Nick's condition was fully explained to them.

But, despite this, Mrs Goss has had bad experiences. One GP told her that she should forget she'd ever had Nick and should go home and have some more children.

### 'She'll never make an athlete'

MRS J. (who wishes to remain anonymous) gave birth to Jane seven weeks early and was quite ill afterwards. Only her husband was told that the baby had a 50-50 chance of survival.

After six weeks in hospital, however, she was allowed to take the baby home. She was still a very tiny baby but no one suggested anything was wrong with her.

She was asked to take the baby to see the paediatrician

every month, which she did. Although she was very worried that the baby was so far behind the development of her friends' babies, she was told nothing until the child was 12 months old and still not sitting up. Then the doctor said "She'll never make an athlete."

At 18 months the baby was finally sitting up and then the doctor's comment was "It does take a long time for spastic children."

Mrs J. said she was utterly shocked. "No one had ever

mentioned the word to me! I had felt that there was something wrong but no one ever told me. After he said that word 'spastic' I was unable to ask another question. If only they had told me gently much, much earlier, it would not have been such a shock."

Jane is now eight and is in a wheelchair. Until the last 12 months when her mother contacted The Spastics Society which is now giving her help and regular visits from a social worker, no one offered her any aid.

### 'Yes, words do matter a lot'

DR Anthony Jackson, a Consultant Paediatrician at the London Hospital, feels that doctors do sometimes fail in the way they break the news of handicap to parents.

"Words do matter an awful lot. How you say things is vital. I prefer not to use the term 'brain damage'—parents don't like it. I say the child's brain isn't functioning as it should for his age.

"The term 'vegetable' which doctors use—I've heard them myself—is absolutely unforgivable."

Dr Jackson says it is

traditional for the doctor to tell the parents that their child is handicapped, but often the ward sister may have a better rapport with the parents.

He would have no objection to a social worker/counsellor doing the telling, or even another parent. But the doctor, he stresses, must always be available to answer all questions fully and freely.

He feels the only way there can be an improvement in the way doctors deal with the heartbreak of handicap is by articulate parents telling doctors where

they've gone wrong in the past.

Mr Tim Yeo, Director of The Spastics Society, commented:

"The experiences of these parents of handicapped children reveal that the medical profession needs to think much more carefully and sensitively about the ways the sad news of a handicapped child is broken to parents. It is also essential that real support and encouragement is given in the ensuing months. This can make a profound difference to the way parents are able to accept the situation."

### 'I cannot forgive the doctors'

MRS Carolyn Ison, of Ashfield Road, Kenilworth, has a spastic daughter of 10, called Jill. She had a difficult labour and was anaesthetised. When she awoke it was to find a Sister bending over her saying "Your baby is dangerously ill. We must christen it. What do you want to call it?"

Through her haze she asked "Is it a boy or a girl?" The Sister said she didn't know and went away to find out.

When she saw the doctor and asked how the baby was, he said "Forget about your baby. She'll be no good."

Mrs Ison could not accept this. She lay in bed and willed the baby to live, refusing sleeping pills so that she could stay with her in spirit. In two weeks the baby was eating, and she was told she was fine and could be taken home.

The consultant told her that Jill was brain damaged due to lack of oxygen and that they would not know for certain how extensive the damage was until she was about two, but that probably she would be unable to communicate and would be in a wheelchair all her life.

"It was terrible to me because she looked all right.



Mrs Ison

My husband and I talked it over and decided to prove the doctors wrong." She took the baby to see the consultant every three months, and although she and her husband could see improvements in her daily, the consultant was gloomy and abrupt and discouraging. She returned home in despair after each visit.

"I felt absolutely deflated and despairing every time I saw anyone in the medical profession. Nevertheless I went on doing what I thought was right because I could see myself that she was improving."

"If I had accepted what the medical profession had said, she would be in a wheelchair today. I just cannot forgive the doctors for the unhappiness they caused me," she said.

**MORE STORIES NEXT PAGE**



## Stars shine at the ball—now for the Carol Concert



DESPITE the grim and harsh winter of economic depression, the Stars Organisation for Spastics' annual Grosvenor House Ball was a glittering and prosperous occasion. Peggy Mount and Dame Vera Lynn had plenty to smile about—Dame Vera's ever-popular Tombola made £2,500.



JIMMY Tarbuck, Frankie Howerd and June Whitfield were at the 26th SOS Ball, which made over £10,000 and included among the guests the star of the popular TV series "Kojak," Telly Savalas.

ONE of the festive season's landmarks is the ever popular Stars Organisation for Spastics' Christmas Concert. The kind of songs that families gathered round the piano to sing in the parlour, together with well loved traditional carols, will all be part of the programme at the Royal Festival Hall on December 13.

There are two shows, one at 4 pm, and another at 8 pm which will be attended by the Society's Patron, the Duchess of Kent.

Taking part are Dame Vera Lynn, SOS chairman Anthony Quayle, Simon Ward, Patrick Moore and opera singers Ava June and Alberto Remedios, among others, with musical directors Geoff Love, Ron Goodwin and John McCarthy and Bob Reader directing the whole show.

## Glamorous Imogen—a dedicated worker

FOR the first time in many years Imogen Hassall decided not to go to the annual Stars Organisation for Spastics Ball.

Instead she planned to go to Africa with friends who felt a holiday would do her good. But when they arrived they discovered her dead in bed, an empty bottle of sleeping pills in one hand and the telephone in the other.

With her death the SOS lost one of their most glamorous, flamboyant, and at the same time dedicated and hardworking members.

Sheila Rawstorne, SOS Director, recalled: "Imogen was a wonderful person, always so lively and fun loving, who could always be relied on to help. Nothing was ever too much



Imogen Hassall.

trouble for her. We only had to ask and she would be there to help. She never minded what she did.

"At the recent premiere of 'Breaker Morant' she turned up wearing a lovely blue gown and full length white fur coat which caught the eye of the Prince of Wales. He stopped to chat, asking her if she wasn't rather warm in it? She always looked stunning when she came to SOS functions, giving that touch of show-biz to events."

Imogen Hassall was the daughter of poet Christopher Hassall, and god-daughter of composer Sir William Walton. She had married twice and had suffered the grief of losing a baby soon after the birth. Subsequent pregnancies ended in miscarriage and Imogen never recovered from these tragedies.

She made her name in the film "The Virgin and the Gypsy" but her film career like her attempts at marriage and motherhood was blighted by lack of success.

The funeral was held at Wimbledon Cemetery on November 22, and among those who attended were David Jacobs, vice-president of SOS, Cherry Turner, from headquarters, Steve Emerson, David Wigg, Robert Morley, Lance Percival and Jennifer Wilson.

An inquest on Miss Hassall was opened at Battersea Coroner's Court and adjourned until December 11.

## Designed to help the handicapped



Illustrated is a small selection from the extensive range of paediatric products available from Newton Aids; manufacturers of the internationally famous Newton and Avon wheelchairs. Many of these products have been designed by therapists for therapists and are much sought after by those caring for the handicapped. All are backed by the experience and expertise of Newton Aids. All are available at attractive prices.

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Newton Aids Limited co-operates closely with The Spastics Society in the development of new aids for the handicapped and in the improvement of existing aids

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## SAD MOMENT OF TRUTH

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### 'Don't worry, woman'

MRS Betty Fisher, of High Street, Dunstable, Doncaster, said that the day after her baby Gary was born he was put into the special care unit because he had had a convulsion.

"My husband and I asked persistently 'why' but the only answer we could get from anyone, doctors, the sister on the ward, or the consultant was that he was having breathing difficulties. Not knowing anything about babies we had to accept their word."

"We were not made aware of any of the possibilities to which this might lead. It was not until he was eight months old when he was not using his right hand and not sitting up properly that the Health Visitor detected something wrong. (It transpired that he was hemiplegic with a speech defect.) She arranged for Gary to see the specialist at the hospital but did not hint what might be wrong," Mrs Fisher said.

"After waiting interminably at the hospital I eventually saw the house registrar to the specialist whose language I could not quite understand

except that I do remember he said, after examining him, 'don't worry, woman, there are plenty of one-handed doctors in the world.'"

"What on earth did he mean by these cruel and insensitive words? It was at this point that I knew that I would wander in a fog for the rest of my child's life if I did not stand my ground — although I had no idea for what I was searching."

Mrs Fisher refused to leave the clinic until she had seen the Professor. He eventually appeared and told her straightforwardly what was wrong and what was likely to occur as far as Gary's behaviour and future were concerned.

"Two out of three things have already come true and the third remains to be seen."

Gary is now 11 years old. "Of course," said Mrs Fisher, "while the Professor could not predict the agonies and the heartaches — and whilst he could not wave a magic wand to make it all go away — I do feel it is most important that parents should be told from the beginning that something is wrong, even if the doctors cannot tell exactly what the results might be."

### 'Have you ever seen one like this before?'

THE first words Mrs Audrey Hurren, of Chaucer Road, Romford, Essex, heard after the birth of her son, Peter, was a Sister saying to the doctor "Look at this, have you ever seen one like this before?" Ten minutes later when her husband George was present the Sister came over and said quite bluntly: "There's something not right with your baby. He's a little bit dwarfed."

Later a doctor appeared and told them that the baby was both spina bifida and spastic. "He reeled off a whole list of medical jargon that we didn't understand and my husband and I were left totally stunned. The words wouldn't sink in," said Mrs Hurren.

Her husband went home in such a daze of anguish that he was nearly knocked down by a car. Later when he returned for a further interview with the doctor, he was told that the baby's condition was such that he was not worth thinking about, or worrying about. It would be best to forget him. "I was so angry," said George, Peter was kept in the hospi-

tal and Audrey returned to her able-bodied son. When she was told she could take the baby home she was given no advice. They simply said "normal baby care." At 13 months he had an operation and, to the doctor's amazement, pushed himself round his cot. It was then that they said he might be able to walk with calipers.

"What angered us was the way they were always referring to him as 'children like this' as if he was some fairground freak. There was no feeling that Peter was an individual in his own right and, as it so happens, has a tremendous will to overcome his difficulties."

Today Peter can dress and undress himself, manage his own toileting, get out and about with his friends. He has joined the Cubs to which able-bodied boys go.

"Although he is very severely handicapped there is not much he won't tackle," says Audrey. "We are determined his life will be as normal as we can possibly make it. We believe he is a happy and well adjusted child. Yet if we'd listened to the doctors we would have abandoned him as no good."

### Two doctors earn mothers' praise

Two parents of handicapped children, however, praise their doctors for the way they handled the situation.

MRS Joan Houlby, of Cleehill Drive, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, has a 17-year-old spastic son. She says that her own GP had always been concerned from the first about her son's development and

had prepared them to expect problems. At 10 months they were told he was spastic, and could not have received more help and positive encouragement about his development.

MRS P. Rix, of Priestley Avenue, Kexborough, Barnsley, Yorkshire, also said that the paediatricians at the hospital who looked after her spastic son explained exactly what he had done for Martin, why

he had done it, and what he was looking for.

"We could not have had more help and understanding from a doctor," she concludes. "I used to go into the doctor's consulting room feeling rather distressed and upset. After we had finished our visit I would come out feeling 10 feet tall because I was given lots of encouragement, praise for the way I was coping, and the belief that it was all worthwhile."



# A new life in Australia for Sheree

THERE was a VIP aboard the plane bound for Perth on November 14—Sheree Venning, the handicapped girl who proved that the Australian Government has a heart as warm as the sun that shines on the tropical city in Wes-

tern Australia.

For after two rejections by the emigration authorities, the government decided after all that Sheree, who is 21, could join the rest of her family in Perth. The story of her heartbreak was first told in Spastics News earlier this year when her parents, Bill and Christine, asked their

MP, Ian Stewart, for help.

The Vennings already had two children, a son and a daughter, in Perth with prosperous businesses. They decided to join them and the Australian High Commission gave no indication that Sheree's handicap — she is mentally as well as physically handicapped — would be a

problem during the preliminary interviews.

The Vennings were anxious to emigrate because they were haunted by the thought of Sheree being left alone after their death because the rest of the family were already in Australia.

All their hopes were dashed by a letter from the Australian High Commission, but the Vennings

decided to fight their rejection on the grounds of Sheree not meeting health requirements.

A second rejection did not deter them either and the publicity surrounding the case built up pressure on the department in Canberra.

The Spastics Society in Perth volunteered to help Sheree on her arrival if she needed it, after reading

of her plight in Spastics News, and her brother and sister have guaranteed her a place in their own luxurious homes when the need arises.

Mr Venning threw a big "thank you" party at his Baldock home just before they left for a future in the sun, the clouds of worry that have darkened their horizon for so long, gone at last.

## AXE FALLS ON JOBS SERVICE

THE Spastics Society, which last year suffered a record deficit of £823,000 due to inflation, crippling VAT payments and other factors, has announced a further drastic cut in its services for handicapped people to avert the danger of much more severe cuts at a later date.

Over 12 months it will be completely shutting down its Careers and Employment Advisory Services operations from 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1, and will be making 35 employees redundant to effect a saving of £1 million. This follows major cuts in the Society's expenditures of £1.5 million made in February this year.

Careers Officers advised thousands of young people over the years and Employment Officers placed many handicapped men and women in employment.

Careful and agonising thought has been given to this decision because it is known how greatly handicapped people rely on the special help, support and encouragement they receive when they are in search of a job. However, any other cuts would have had a much more disastrous effect on spastic people.

Mr Tim Yeo, Director of The Spastics Society, said: "We recently received a flat refusal to our plea to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make charities a special case for exemption from the cruel burden of VAT. This year the Society's unrecoverable VAT will be not less than £220,000 and next year we estimate that the amount will rise to a staggering £1 million.

"The Chancellor would not even agree to meet us to discuss the situation. Yet the whole philosophy of this Government is to rely on the voluntary sector for more and more services to replace the provisions axed by an insensitive Government. Partly because of the Chancellor we are reluctantly forced into making cuts to the tune of £1 million. It is appalling that money generously donated by a caring public to help spastic people should end up locked in Treasury coffers.

"By cutting the Careers and Employment Services we believe we have secured the future of all other services we provide, assuming that we enjoy continuing public support."

REACTION of the staff in the department to the news of their redundancy was one of "shock," and concern for the handicapped youngsters who will now have no access to expertise.

Alastair Macdougall has been a careers officer with the Society for two years, and before that was a disablement resettlement officer with the Manpower Services Commission. He is responsible for the area covering Central London through Surrey and Hampshire down to the Isle of Wight.

"I thought my job was as safe as houses, and although we were all aware that the Society had been undergoing financial problems over the last 12 months we had the impression that our department was fairly high on the list of priorities.

"One of the problems for us is that some have no specific qualifications to do anything different. I'd anticipated staying with the Society for quite some time and obviously I'm a bit worried as to how I'm going to pay the mortgage. But what chiefly worries all of us is the fact that the Careers Assessment Centre is unique — no other voluntary organisation or local authority actually runs a similar kind of assessment service. That means a very big gap opening up for young handicapped people leaving school — and there is nothing to fill it."

Between 80-90 per cent of the youngsters coming for assessment have been referred by their local authority, and go on to further education as a result.

Doreen Hinchliffe has been covering the London boroughs of Bromley and Bexley as well as Kent and Sussex for the past year since leaving Yorkshire where she had taught at

## Staff 'shock' — but major concern is for handicapped

Rotherham Sixth Form College. "I came into the job because I wanted to do something wider than teaching and I'm most concerned that the assessment service is closing."

For the past 13 years Daphne Fort has been placement officer based at the Family Services and Assessment Centre in Fitzroy Square, but travelling all over the country. She said simply: "I am shattered the service should go."

Jackie Paulson, senior careers officer, based in Sheffield, said: "I was actually out visiting and it was late at night when I got the news.

I am very sorry that a service is being denied the handicapped, much more than a personal feeling. I think all of us felt this initial reaction — it centred on the loss of service rather than our own jobs. We know that no one else will take over and it has terrible implications for both the young and

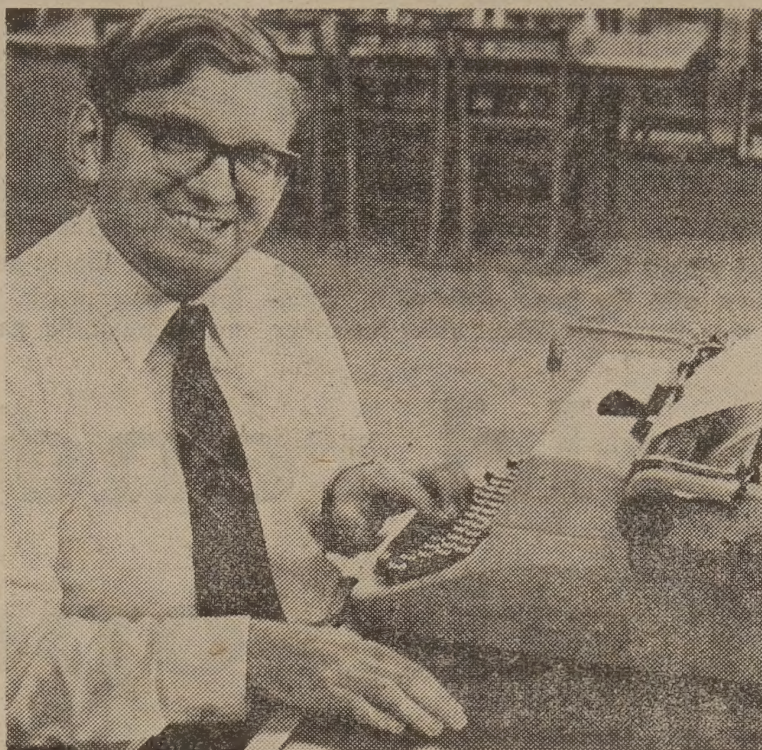
old".

Sue Hennessey gave up teaching to work for the Society in the North West region just 10 weeks before news of the closure came.

"I've been touring round different local authority areas and everywhere in the region I've met with sighs of relief that at last a replacement had been appointed — my predecessor left in May.

"Local authority officers just haven't got the specialist knowledge needed — they have perhaps 250 school leavers on their books and the handicapped on top of that."

Another successful typist is Mavis Ashby, of Chester-



## Alan's new typing technique

field, Derbyshire, who has passed a Royal Society of Arts examination in type-writing. Mavis, who is spastic, can type with only one finger, holding her right wrist with her left hand.

She seldom makes a mistake, because if she hits the wrong key she is unable to use either a rubber or correcting fluid.

"Mavis is the most determined student we have ever had," said her tutor at Chesterfield Technical College.

Mavis works four days a week as a typist at a local rehabilitation centre but would like to find work she can do at home.

Picture of Alan by the Evening Chronicle, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

## Euro-MPs hope to aid disabled

EURO-MPs representing the nine countries of the EEC met in Strasbourg on November 18 to discuss plans to help the disabled citizens of the Community.

They were joined by representatives of seven leading British voluntary organisations, including The Spastics Society.

It is hoped that the new pressure group — which holds its next meeting in Luxembourg on December 15 — will become a vital force to champion the needs and rights of the disabled in the European Parliament.

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# Focus on the Cheyne Centre for Spastics



● LINDA Butterfint had never taught in a special school before she joined the centre at Easter. She sees her job as equipping the children with the basic skills of recognising shapes, colours, letters and numbers before they leave her infant class for other schools.

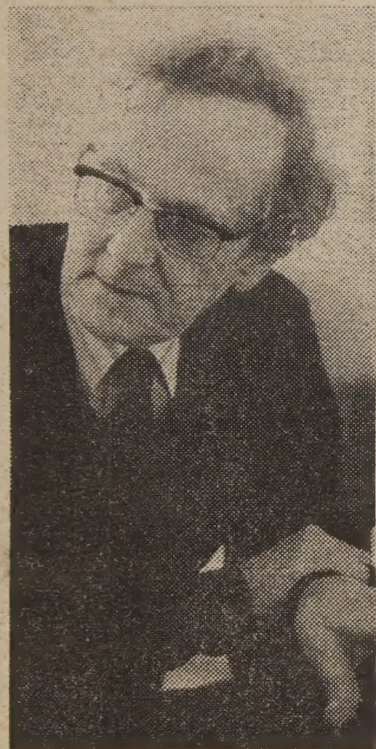


● PATTY Singleton has been Superintendent for seven years — not a title she likes but the actual job she enjoys, although the re-organisation of the NHS has lead to a lot of paperwork. An accomplished skier and singer and an enthusiastic gardener, she has just taken up woodwork.



● NOREEN Hare has been with the centre for 10 years and is both superintendent physiotherapist and Course Director. A warm and energetic woman she says, "You stay in the field because you're interested, otherwise you would be overwhelmed. Cerebral palsy is such a wide field."

## World renown and a — but still 'open to challenge



● DR John Foley is the physician in charge at Cheyne Walk and in his 25 years has seen over 2,000 children. His soft voice quietly reassures them when as consultant neurologist he "wires them up" to diagnostic machines. An inventive mind, he has also developed a process of copying from 16mm film on to 35mm slides.



● MARGARET Allen is the domiciliary physiotherapist treating babies and children either at home or in nurseries. She also keeps tabs on children who have gone from the centre into ordinary schools, and regularly checks a couple of adolescents whose families are grateful for the centre's continued care.

THE elegant shell of No 61 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, houses a unique institution — a hospital where there are no nurses, just one nursing sister wearing jeans and a casual smock, a school where children who would once have been considered ineducable learn vital basic skills and where doctors from all over the world learn more about cerebral palsy, and an inventor's workshop.

The Cheyne Spastics Centre is all this and more, which accounts for its world-wide renown. This year the centre celebrates its silver jubilee.

It was purpose-built as a children's hospital but that was a century ago.

Traces of its original decor remain — elaborate wrought iron and polished wood banisters and charming ceramic tiles commemorating where endowed cots stood. Signs of the 1980's are the intricate electronic aids for diagnosis and education.

The original hospital was evacuated in 1939, never came back and is now in West Wickham, Kent. During the war the building was used for refugees, and eventually as a children's day nursery.

The local hospital management committee discovered a need for a treatment centre and, as a Ministry of Health property, No 61 was ideal for the purpose. It was opened in 1955 with just eight children.

Since then thousands of

parents have made their way along the Embankment to the house between Albert and Battersea Bridges, so that their children can receive hope, encouragement and treatment at the Cheyne Centre for Spastic Children.

Patty Singleton has been the Superintendent for the last seven years. New Zealand greenstone jewellery and a slight accent indicate her country of birth where she trained as an occupational therapist.

"Although when I came, the centre was well established, it has never become stuck in its ways, it has always been open to challenge, and people are constantly stimulated into new thoughts and ideas."

"We do a lot of post-graduate teaching which means staff are constantly being asked questions so they have to come up with original ideas."

But because the centre is fundamentally for children it was established early on that their treatment and education

should not be disrupted. So a system of filming each child was introduced by consultant neurologist Dr John Foley who has been with the centre since its start.

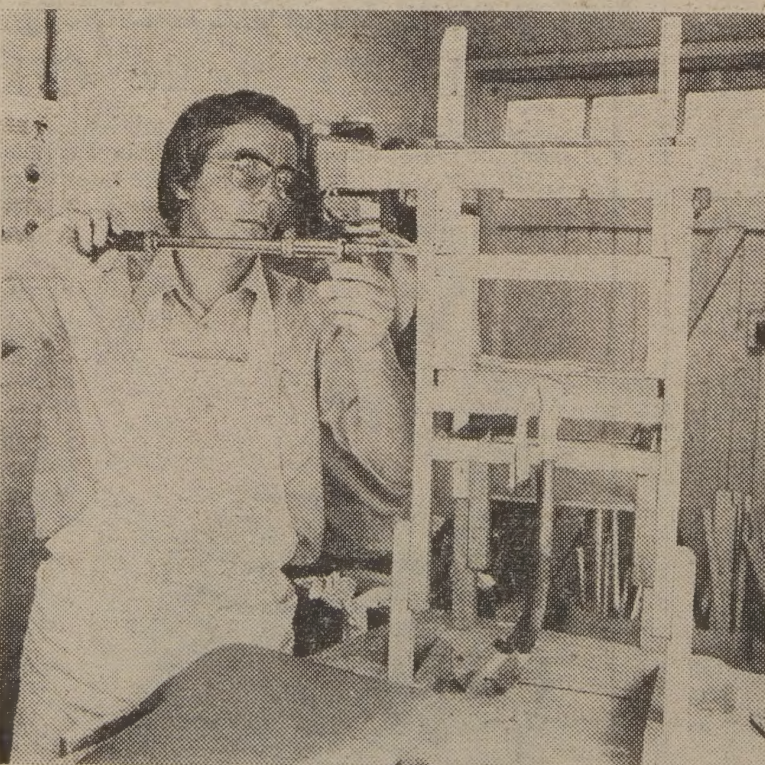
"When I was appointed I'd never seen a spastic in my life — well just one — and so I was sent to Denmark to see Professor Plum. He told me 'Always film and film more than you think', he recalled."

Now there are three cupboards of film and Dr Foley has invented a technique of copying the frames on to 35mm slides.

Closed circuit tv is also used to evaluate the children.

### Early help

The type of children vary from the very severely multiply handicapped to very mild hemiplegics and ataxics, and the very youngest patient to be referred was just two weeks old. The centre is very keen that children should be referred as soon as possible so that they are taken out of a hospital outpatient department and a once a week treatment.



● REG Saunders adapts a chair in his carpentry workshop. The Centre has a distinguished name in inventing and adapting all manner of aids for the handicapped.

The emphasis is very much on educational treatment — "We don't want to just give a diagnosis and then leave them up in the air," said Patty.

There are four classes, reception, nursery, infant and one known universally as "Chris's class." It was formerly called the special care unit taking children with massive handicaps, and since no-one can think of an alternative title it takes the name of the teacher, Chris Robertson. He read Indian Philosophy at Durham before going to Sri Lanka for three years and then spent a year nursing at a sub-normality hospital before joining the centre a year ago.

Noreen Hare is both the superintendent physiotherapist and course director. She explained: "All the disciplines work very closely together — physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, and we really do all work as a team."

"We see the three major objectives of development as communication, function and physical ability. Every child is fascinating and this is a constant challenge. Every child has taught me something."

### Objectives

All children have some ability and an unknown potential. We work with the child and not on it. I am constantly surprised at how diligently and persistently a child will work towards a physical goal. There is no limit to what a motivated child will do to succeed.

"And we never underestimate the mother. If she thinks there is something wrong then I say don't wait for a referral — do something. We never ever send them away with nothing to do, but give them exercises to do at home."

Lesley Carroll is the senior speech therapist and says: "Our main aim is to provide a means of communication which need not be speech. Because no matter what the problem, a lack of communication can be their



● LESLEY Carroll has been senior speech therapist for seven years and explained: "Speech therapy used to be concerned just with speech, whereas we're concerned with language and comprehension. We work hard to get a child's understanding on a par with its mental ability. Then we can work with speech or Bliss symbols."

biggest handicap. A lad of 10 came in the other day and somehow no one had spotted his potential. All he could do was grunt 'Yeh' and he was so depressed. It was heartbreaking that he had not been sent to us sooner."

In order to teach children to talk they are first taught to communicate since they need the mouth for both. Many children arrive brought up on baby food because it is easier, so they have to be taught to chew, bite and swallow. If they never attain speech then they use Bliss symbols and electronic devices.

"It is also heartbreaking when you teach a child Bliss symbols and they are sent away somewhere which doesn't use it — it's like cutting their tongues out."

Rosemary Phillpot is

STORY: LIZ COOK. PICTURES:



# Children



● **LUNCHTIME** is an extension of lessons since eating correctly is vital to speech, and the whole staff encourage children to bite, chew and swallow food properly. Here Bernard O'Donoghue, child care assistant, and Helen McCloughry, occupation therapist, make meal time fun for the nursery class.

## Silver Jubilee 'enge'

head occupational therapist and explained: "We look at a child to see if he can sit or stand on his own, and then adapt furniture and equipment with the carpenter's help if it is necessary."

"The next big area is feeding, dressing and toileting where we advise. OT's spend a lot of time doing hand functions in relation to perceptual motor activities. All three disciplines tie up together."

### Technology

"We also have to learn to be experts with electronics since the new technology has made a vast difference to our work. Toys and educational devices can all be adapted and used with any one of a variety of switches. We try not to be too high-powered since the electronic equipment is expensive and other types might be more accessible."

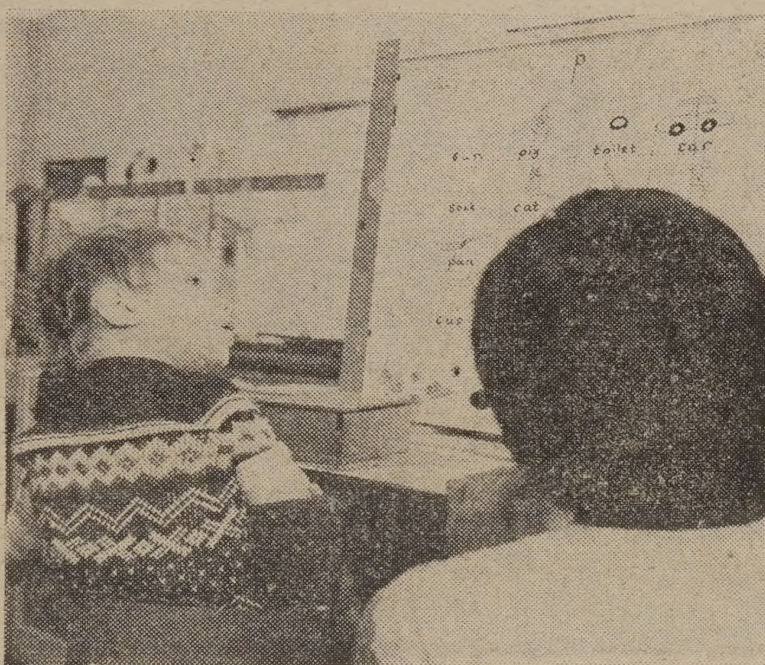
Cheyne Walk is not contained within four walls since it became obvious that some residential accommodation was also required very early on. The indefatigable voluntary group Friends of Cheyne Walk purchased the house next door but one, as a hostel for weekly boarders and short-stay children.

The Friends have played an immeasurable role in the development and expertise of the centre and have funded a wide range of projects.

Cheyne Walk is an undoubted success within the National Health Service, aided in its role by the enthusiasm of the Friends for fund-raising and the dedication of the people who work there. It is a perfect model to be copied, which makes it all the more surprising that as yet no one has done so.

The Centre has had 25 years of helping spastic children and looks forward to the challenge of the next 25.

ME ABRAHAMS



● **LITTLE Gary** went from the nursery class to the special care unit, where he blossomed, and was transferred back to the nursery. He has now made his way into the infant class where he will stay, despite being nine years of age, till he is ready to change schools. Here he demonstrates his comprehension skills to Rosemary Phillipot.



● **DAVID** works with a will for physiotherapist Lee Bonella. If a child is just about to start walking he becomes a priority for treatment, and the part played by the parents giving regular help at home is acknowledged.

## IYDP is coming—will it make the world a better place for the disabled?

SINCE July 1979, preparations have been under way to make the world a better one for the estimated 450,000,000 people who are disabled with 1981 designated the International Year of Disabled People by the United Nations.

Stephen Crampton has been seconded by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, which is the information centre for the Year in this country, to act as organising secretary.

"The IYDP will mean different things in different countries. Each country will decide what it considers a priority. In Britain, for instance, we're aiming for better attitudes to the disabled, preventing disability and promoting integration."

"Prevention of handicaps refers to both pre-natal care and, for instance, injuries caused through motor accidents. In India, on the other hand, polio is

rife and there are very few motor cars in relation to the population.

"We stress the fact although the United Nations gives the overall aims, it is up to each country what they do. It is not a fund raising year and its success depends on what people put into it. The IYDP provides an opportunity to focus attention on the disabled and people should take advantage of this in order to get their point of view across—basically at grass roots level."

### Events

Throughout Britain the different leading organisations are producing their own events to mark the year. The Spastics Society's contribution is Dis-Tech—a conference on Disability and technology in the '80s held in conjunction with British Rail.

It is being held at Sussex University between March 30-April 3 and will examine the applications of today's and tomorrow's technology to some of the problems of disability, and also to the needs of disabled people, their families

and those who work with them.

The main areas dealt with will be transportation; mobility, communication, education, aids to daily living, employment and the environment. A wide variety of disciplines is expected to be represented, particularly planners, teachers, psychologists, therapists, employment technologists, architects, transport authorities, administrators from the fields of housing, education, social services, consumer organisations and the disabled themselves.

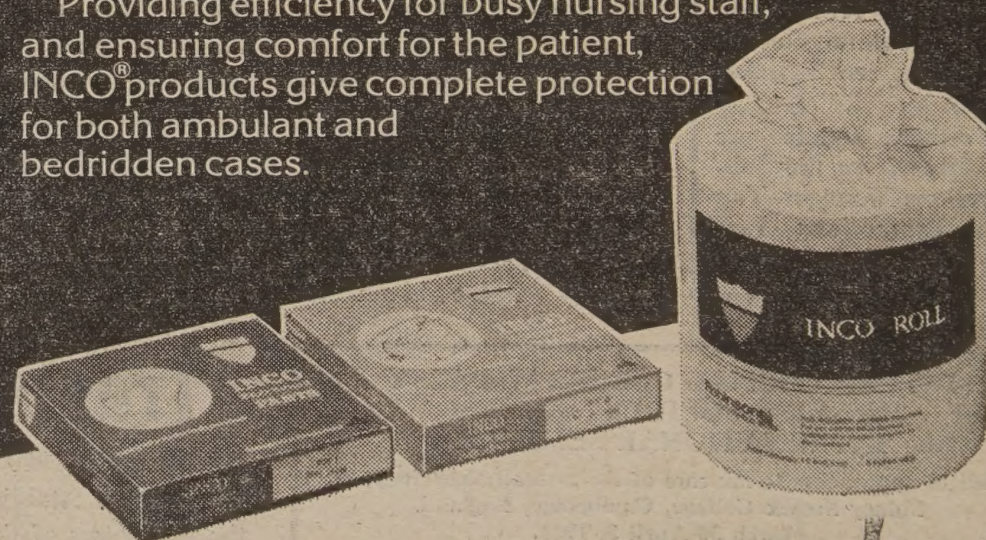
Speakers and contributors are coming from all over the world and the conference is expected to attract up to 300 delegates.

There will be special facilities for the disabled and also special British Rail travel facilities. The conference is being co-ordinated by Bill Hargreaves who can be contacted at the Society's headquarters, 12 Park Crescent, London W1.

Some of the plans at local level to stimulate interest in IYDP include persuading the Mayor or similar public figure to spend the day in a wheelchair discovering the problems of access, with the local press in attendance, an exchange trip for disabled people to a "Twin Town," a church service, exhibitions, and public meetings.

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# LETTERS

I CONSIDER myself a calm and reasonable person, but my blood boiled when I read the story in Spastics News (November issue) about the vicious attacks made by young hooligans on a Society centre.

That these morons vandalise is bad enough, but the fact that they harass and humiliate the spastic workers too is beyond belief. The thought of these innocent people being jeered at and taunted with cries of "spackos" is horrifying. What sort of world do we live in?

Thank heaven you present another side of the coin in your newspaper. After reading about the yobboes it restored my faith in young human nature to read about the prep school boys who raised nearly £5,000 for a playroom at one of your centres. Their proud faces in the picture encourage me to believe that there is still hope for civilisation.

Mrs M. Jones, Cardiff.

## They seek views on transport problems

WE have just begun a research project at the Department of Transport Technology to gather information about specialised vehicles for the handicapped and elderly.

Briefly the research falls into three sections: (a) an examination of the UK demand for such vehicles. This is the immediate priority and it seems that only some analysis has been undertaken on mobility problems in relation to specific disabilities involved. At the end of the

day we hope to have sufficient data to equate these problems when looking directly at vehicle provision and design. A "grass roots" approach should be the mainstay of this element and naturally we wish to hear from anyone who could assist us. (b) a review of existing specialised vehicles to ascertain what is available now and also to look at design options for the future. (c) the marrying of information gathered in the first two sections in order to examine strategies for disabled people's transport.

## Lin's book

AS an able-bodied reader of Spastics News I was interested to read about Lin Berwick's book "Undeclared," published by Epworth Press. Could you give me the full address as I've several people interested in the book (including myself!).

Jean Monaghan (Miss),  
Kestrels,  
Woodend,  
Egremont,  
Cumbria.

● Epworth Press, The Methodist Publishing House, Wellington Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 8EU. There is a review of Lin's book on Page 11.

## Stephen's story

I WAS delighted to read the very sensitive story about Stephen that you published in Spastics News. I would also like to echo the sentiments about the debt of gratitude we owe Mrs Cresswell at The Spastics Society's Family Help Unit for giving the family so much of her time and experience to help them prepare for adopting Stephen.

I am pleased to say that Stephen is thriving in every possible way in their care and we hope that an application to adopt him will be submitted shortly.

I thought that the pictures you included in the article were absolutely tremendous.

PAMELA VASS,  
Social Worker,  
Barnardo's  
New Families Project,  
Warman House,  
12 St Botolph's Street,  
Colchester,  
Essex.

## Praise from Greece

WE would like to renew our subscription to Spastics News.

We are looking forward to receiving your newspaper again. The people who work with CP babies and children in our centre often find helpful information in it. But what, we all, professionals and volunteers, like "Spastics News" for that it expresses a progressed philosophy concerning the rights and problems of persons with handicaps and their families.

Lena Stylianov,  
Thessaloniki,  
Greece.

## Any thoughts on centres?

I AM a disabled person and I want to write a book about handicapped people in centres. I want to know the residents' thoughts about their centres so I can use it for information for my book.

Stephen Symmonds,  
Drummonds Centre,  
Feering,  
Nr Colchester,  
Essex.

## Can you help Ivancica?

BY means of this letter, I want to ask you for help in realising the investigation project which will give, as I expect, results — useful for future education of cerebral palsied children and youth and for other handicapped pupils as well.

Since in the Socialist Republic of Croatia, SFR Yugoslavia, we are performing the integration of handicapped children and youth into ordinary primary and secondary schools, we must make modifications in teaching programmes to be adapted to their abilities. We also must consider the organisation of teaching process and make it acceptable for all handicapped pupils.

I participate in drawing up a new programme of teaching literature. We would appreciate the experience of foreign countries and I am kindly asking you to help us by sending us any of the following materials or information: literature about possibilities of intellectual education of handicapped children and youth; teaching programmes and textbooks for literature for handicapped pupils in ordinary or special schools; teachers' instruction books for teaching literature when working with handicapped pupils; magazines in which handicapped children and youth publish their poems, essays, etc.

Each contribution will be welcomed.

The materials can be in any language. When forwarding them please note sums due, and the way of payment.

Thanking you, for your understanding, I send you my best regards.

MISS IVANCICA  
PLANING,  
41000 Zagreb,  
Kupska 62 a,  
Yugoslavia.

VIDEO equipment for a mentally handicapped training centre was the last presentation to be made by the Evelyn Collier Spastic and Disabled Fund in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

The fund, started by Mr Robert Whinham in 1976, is being wound up because of Mr Whinham's ill health and the video equipment represented the last £800.

## News about the Spastics Pool

TICKETS, in the form of bankers orders, are available to anyone wishing to pay 24 weeks or 52 weeks in advance for membership of the Spastics Charity Football Pool.

The tickets, which are in books of 10, will obviously appeal to people who are unable to make regular contact with official collectors.

Collectors who recruit members for 24 weeks (£3.60) or 52 weeks (£7.80) will receive 40p of 80p commission in respect of each ticket sold.

Further details are available from the Subscriptions Manager, Top Ten Promotions Ltd, PO Box 215, Bristol.



AREA supervisor Laurie Watterson (right), hon secretary of the Isle of Man Spastics Welfare Fund, with Spastics Pool collector George Corlett (left), Geoff and Carole Wade, Len Kerruish, and the Salvation Army Band at the Thanksgiving Service at the charity Mhelliah in

Douglas, which raised £240 towards the cost of the Christmas party for local handicapped children.

Officials of the Welfare Fund are awaiting permission from Tynwald to promote their own instant lottery to help raise £250,000 for the Island's Holiday Centre project.



HTV personality, Richard Wyatt (second right) presenting the keys of a mini bus to Chris Thomas, chairman of the Lanercost Centre Association, watched by Roy Laver (right) and Geoffrey Arter, Directors of Tpo Ten Promotions and Trustees of the Good Neighbours Trust.

The presentation took

place at the Lanercost training centre for the mentally handicapped, Bristol, on November 25.

The centre caters for 150 trainees, aged from 16 to over 70. The mini bus, which was purchased with funds raised by the Association and a donation from the Good Neighbours Trust, will be used on a daily basis for both educational and social activities.

## INTERNATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

Radical approaches to the care of the mentally handicapped, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, England, March 30-April 3, 1981.

FIFTY per cent of all cerebral palsied people have a mental handicap and in 25 per cent it is severe. In most countries, including England, there exist institutions where these people pass their lives. Many of the adults can scarcely remember any other "home" and they are certainly no place for children.

The ICPS suspects that there is now sufficient support which includes those at senior government level, doctors, nurses, teachers, parents and some of the mentally handicapped themselves to finally force the decision makers to radically revise their plans. The above international meeting will discuss this under four general headings:

- (1) Reducing the incidence of mental handicap.
- (2) Alternatives to institutional care.
- (3) Comparisons between countries regarding care and plans for the mentally handicapped.
- (4) Politics and the mentally handicapped.

The language of the meeting will be English and the total cost, including registration fee, accommodation and meals, will be £90.

Applications to attend the meeting should be addressed to: Mrs Anita Loring, ICPS, 5a Netherhall Gardens, London NW3 5RN, England.

## Trusts have helped 1,000-plus charities

IN the early 1960's, three Trusts were established by the promoters of the Spastics Charity Football Pool to provide financial assistance to registered charitable organisations. Since that time, over 1,000 charities have received approximately £6½ million. Here is news of some recent Trust donations:

£500 was presented to Sir Peter Scott, Director of the Wildfowl Trust, in response to an appeal for a guided nature trail for the blind at Martin Mere in Lancashire. The trail will have braille notices, specially prepared cassette recordings, tactile exhibitions and cassette players for use by visitors. The success of the first nature trail at Slimbridge prompted the decision to

launch an appeal in the hope that the Martin Mere trail will be ready during 1981, the International Year for Disabled People.

The Good Neighbours Trust contributed to the Slimbridge nature trail for the blind.

An appeal launched by the West of England School for children with little or no sight aims to raise £150,000 for a mother and baby unit and medical centre, accommodation for the youngest blind children and a two-storey teaching block with four classrooms and an invalid lift.

The Sembal and Good Neighbours Trust have donated £6,000 and the cheque was presented to Bishop W. A. E. Westall, President of the appeal, by Geoffrey Arter, a trustee of both trusts, at the

West of England School, Countess Wear, Exeter, in November.

A fund-raising wine and cheese evening in Stourport on Severn on November 15 was the ideal occasion for Mr Peter Broderick, Director of Top Ten Promotions, to present a £2,000 Good Neighbours Trust cheque to Mr Brian Henley, chairman of the Worcestershire Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. The Association hopes to buy a mini bus to provide transport for its 50 disabled members.

£1,500 has been donated by the Good Neighbours Trust to the Friends of St Oswalds mini bus appeal. The cheque was presented to Mr Cyril Tonks, organiser of the appeal, by Mr Roy Laver, trustee of the Good Neighbours Trust, at St Oswalds for the Mentally Handicapped, Gloucester, in November.

## Your ads

ONE Minivator stair lift, 4 years old, good condition, £795 ono. Can be seen working.—Business Keynsham 3464—after 6.30 pm weekdays Stafford 2200.

FOR sale: Everest and Jennings reclining wheelchair used for one month only, £75.—Mr W. R. Shorey, 74 Stephen Avenue, Rainham, Essex, Rainham 52864.

FOR sale: Everest and Jennings powered wheelchair, model 873, finger joy-stick control, very good condition, approximately three years old; folds when batteries are removed. £375 ono. Would deliver reasonable distance Nottingham. —Tel Nottingham 287241.

THERAPY in Music for Handicapped Children: A weekend course to be held at the Polytechnic of Central London, 115 New Cavendish Street, W1, on January 31/February 1, 1981. An introduction for teachers, parents, playgroup leaders and others interested in working with handicapped children. Organised by The Nordoff/Robbins Music Therapy Centre Ltd. Details from the Secretary, 6 Queensdale Walk, London, W11 4QQ.



# Royal visit to crown school's 25th birthday celebrations



● ONE of the first pupils the Princess met was Rachel Thomas, aged 11, who was hard at work at her typewriter when she was introduced by deputy head John James.

## Children welcome Princess Anne

THE Royal visit had been moving at a polite and formal pace as Princess Anne toured the Society's Craig-y-Parc School at Pentyrch, near Cardiff, when she stopped by Louise Penney's wheelchair.

With enormous determination, patience and perseverance Louise struggled to point out a message on her "Bliss" symbol chart: "I-am-very-pleased - to - hear - you - are - having - a - new - baby." And a delighted Princess, her face radiating with a happy smile, laughed: "I'm very pleased, too."

Only the day before the Princess had announced she was to be a mother again next May. By the time she arrived at Craig-y-Parc to mark the climax of the school's 25th Anniversary celebrations she had already opened a shopping centre in Bridgend, toured a chemical factory and attended a lunch at the Mid Glamorgan County Hall.

Also at the lunch were the Society's Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith; the Director of Resources, Derek Lancaster-Gaye; Betty Adams, education officer; Mrs Maureen Fowler, headmistress; and Miss Miriam Jowett, Chairman of the school's Management Committee; all of whom were presented to the Princess on her arrival at the school.

She looked in on the Bliss symbol class first of all, where all the children are unable to walk or talk.

Deputy head John



● THE physiotherapy department was full of activity when the Princess looked round with superintendent physiotherapist Morella Chilton. House parent Joan Williams was helping Jane Lippett, aged 13, with a jigsaw, while physiotherapist Sue Davies watches as Tina Farrow, aged 11, tries her hand at the adventure play box.

James, who teaches the class, soon found his Royal visitor knew a fair bit about the system already. She chatted knowledgeably about it as she moved among the wheelchairs while the children, all dressed in their very best with immaculate hair and shiny faces, demonstrated their skills on the Bliss cards and screens.

The Princess had asked Mr James if Bliss had made a lot of difference to the children, and the children were eager to demonstrate that it did. They also demonstrated impeccable manners which brought a murmur of praise from the party accompanying the Princess round the school.

Despite TV cameramen and Press photographers clambering among them and the invasion of their classroom by a varied assortment of dignitaries, including the spectacularly uniformed county Lieutenant, Mr Harry Knight, and security guards, the children did not fidget, show off or play up.

"Quite remarkably good, aren't they—you wouldn't get this in many schools," commented the Princess's Lady-in-Waiting, the Hon Mrs Legge-Bourke.

From there, the Princess was taken to the physiotherapy room where Morella Chilton, who has been at the school 15 years, answered the Princess's questions about the uses of physiotherapy in correcting sitting problems.

Then it was time for the Princess to see the children perform some of their physical skills — first in the swimming pool and then wheelchair dancing. A bouquet was presented to her by Stephen West and then under the direction of Mrs Ann Magor, the class threaded their way through "Petronella."

By the time the Princess reached the Leavers' Unit for 14-16 year olds it was time for tea. The three boys and three girls who live in the Unit learning independence skills, impressed her with their



prowess in the Unit's kitchen and she joked with them about their choice of sandwich filling.

"You don't have egg sandwiches every day, surely?" she asked. And Jane Douglas presented her with another posy, this time of carnations, freesias and roses.

Back in the school's main reception room there was just time for the Princess to snatch a quick cup of tea herself. The RAF crew responsible for her flight home were growing increasingly anxious about the weather conditions and asked the Princess to cut her visit short by 20 minutes.

In fact, the Princess stayed, smiling, joking, asking questions and listening intently. Then it was really time to leave and the Princess made her way past the children in the wheelchairs who were

swathed in blankets against the bitter cold.

And as the helicopter rose in the air one little girl, so small that there was no way she could possibly see over the heads of those in front of her, kept waving her flag. Two burly policemen, a Chief Inspector and a sergeant recognised her plight and without a word heaved her shoulder-high, wheelchair and all. She waved until the Princess was quite out of sight.

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● MRS Maureen Fowler, the headmistress, shows the playcorner enjoyed by children in Mrs Brenda Isaacs' class, using foam apparatus donated by a local golf club.



● MRS Ann Magor's wheelchair dance class wheel their way through Petronella for the Princess. Here Amanda Bullion, Julie Pithers, Helen Ingram and Louise Penney did her proud with excellent sitting postures as well as rhythms.



● DEPUTY head John James shows the Princess how modern technology helps the handicapped to communicate, as Ruth Boxall operates her Possum typewriter and Patrick Bates seems to be saying to houseparent Betty Martin: "Didn't I do well. . . ."



# News round-up on fund raising



**CHILDREN** of Wyken Croft Junior School in Coventry have raised £740 with a sponsored spell in aid of Coventry and District Spastics Society. All the schools in the area have been invited to take part in the spelling scheme and nine more have accepted.

★ ★ ★

THE staff of Carrs Biscuit Works, Carlisle, have raised £288 with a charity football match for Scalescough Hall spastics centre.

★ ★ ★

A SPONSORED run held by the Heighington and Anwick Karate Clubs has raised £818 for Lincolnshire Spastics, and more money is expected to come in from sponsors.

★ ★ ★

A COLLECTION in the Leigh area of Manchester has raised over £1,380.36 for The Spastics Society.

★ ★ ★

LONGFIELD House Spastics Centre in Swansea will soon have a new ambulance, thanks to Swansea and Mumbles Branches of the Round Table. The Tablers plan to raise £13,000 this year for the vehicle.

The first £9,000 has already been raised and it is hoped that a sponsored walk will bring in the remaining £4,000.

★ ★ ★

A SPONSORED hitch-hike by Mr David Pollard, ex-president of Burnley Rotoract, has raised £200 for Burnley and Rossendale Spastics Society.

Mr Pollard's route led from Preston to Bristol, Newcastle, Carlisle and back to Preston. The journey took 36 hours, 36 minutes and left him, in his own words, "shattered," but the amount received from sponsors made the effort worthwhile.

★ ★ ★

THE Lincolnshire Steam Spectacular mounted by the Lincoln Spastics Society was the 14th — and more than 14,000 visited the show. Steam engines dating to the 1920s competed and the Mayor of Lincoln, Coun David Chambers, won a steering event.

## WHEELCHAIRS

### Ashley Mobility

Authorised Distributors for Vessa Ltd's range of Electric and Hand Propelled WHEELCHAIRS in West Midlands, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire (Sales and Service).

Group or Home Demonstrations.

Hay Road, Hay Mills, Birmingham B25 8HY. Telephone 021-772 5364

Also at Warndon, Worcester (Telephone 28575)

**WINKING** for spastics — that's a new one, even to Spastics News. Regulars of the Tollgate public house, Penparcau, Aberystwyth, have instituted the "Royal Society of Winkers." Anybody who breaks the elaborate code of rules has to pay a fine which goes

into the charity box.

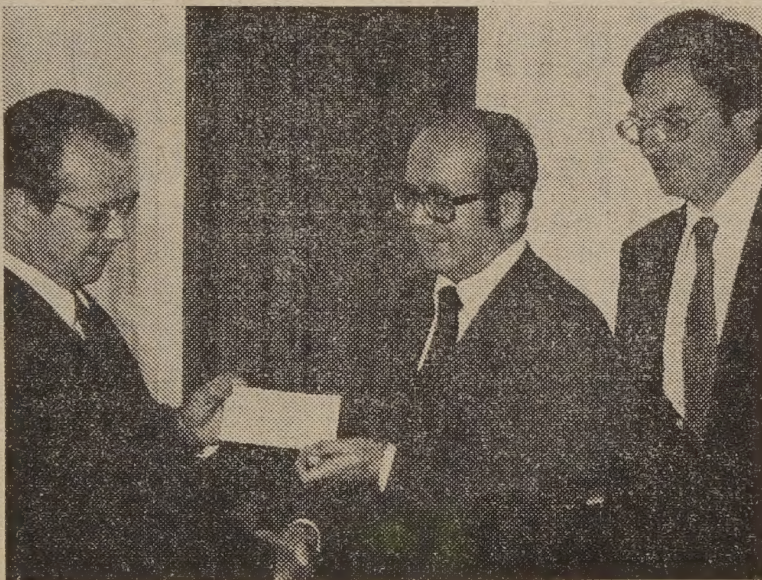
The winkers have so far raised hundreds of pounds for various causes, including The Spastics Society.

Pictured in action are (left to right) secretary Meurig Evans, treasurer Ken Evans and chief winker Brian Williams.

Picture by Cambrian News

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★



**JOHN Knights** (left) lost 56 pounds to gain £266 for the Welwyn Garden City and District Spastics Society. In his job as catering manager at ICI Plastics John is tempted by fattening foods all day, therefore a sponsored slim was no easy task.

He went down from 15 stones 9 pounds to 11 stones 9 pounds in four months.

In the picture, Joseph David, the group's Chairman, receives the money, while Treasurer John Foster looks on.

Picture by Welwyn Times

**MOST** people receive presents on their 21st birthday. But Wendy Taylor, of Nantwich, Cheshire, is planning to celebrate her coming of age in 1982 by handing over a large sum to charity.

Wendy, who is spastic, and her parents, have already raised hundreds of pounds for the special schools and hospitals she has attended since infancy. Now they have launched a grand appeal for a donation worthy of Wendy's 21st birthday in two years' time.

The fund was started with a disco for Wendy's 19th birthday in October, open to all at £1 a head.



**WHEN** The Spastics Society was forced to reduce its grant to the Trengweth School Canoeing group, David Mann decided to help out with a sponsored tandem ride.

David, who is blind, undertook a 40-mile ride from Plymouth to Gunnislake and back, with a friend, Keith Walker. They raised £87, which will help the spastic pupils of Trengweth to carry on canoeing.

Picture by Western Evening News

★ ★ ★

**WESTON** and District Society for the Spastic and Mentally Handicapped was hardly prepared for the big surprise it received when it ran a "Teddy Bears' Picnic" stall at Weston-super-Mare. Over £2,000 was raised, it was reported at the Society's Annual General Meeting.

At the meeting, chairman Mr Ron Goodman, expressed concern about the local authority's decision to shelve plans for a special care unit in the area.

★ ★ ★

**HULL** and District Spastics Society put on an open flower and vegetable show at its headquarters in Wayne Road.

★ ★ ★

A DOOR-to-door collection in Bexhill, Battle, Rye and area has raised £2,543 for The Spastics Society.

## Helping to save babies

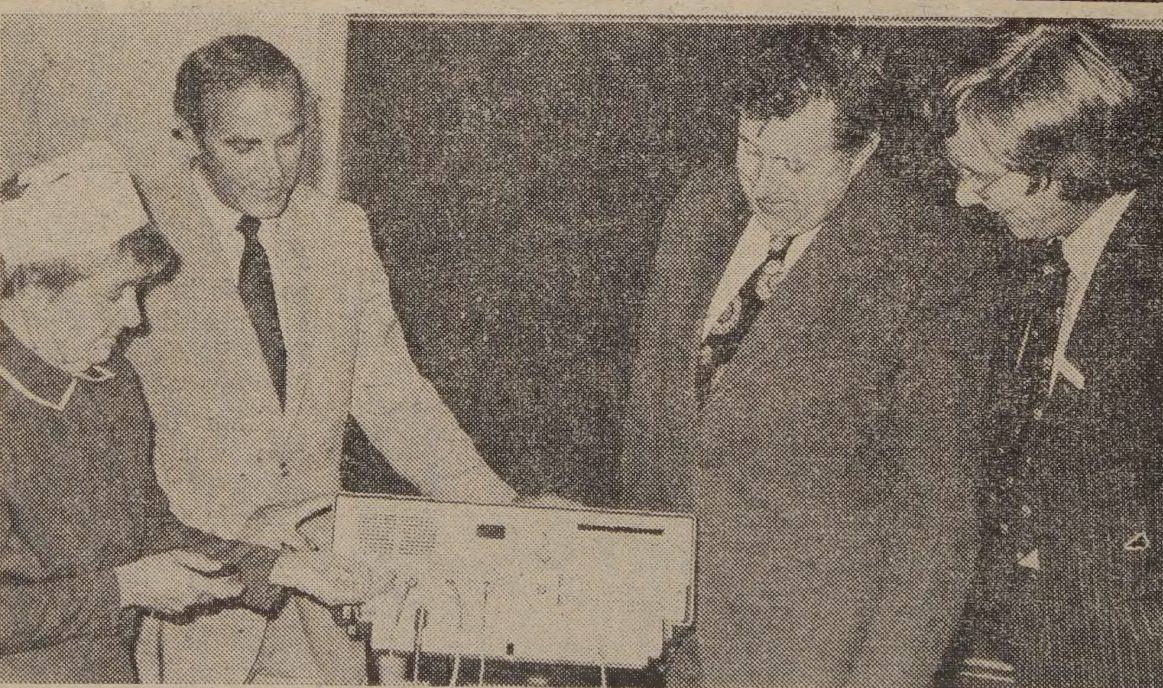
**GLOUCESTER** and District Spastics Association was anxious to find a project to support—when the West's regional officer, Kay Sunderland, discovered that Gloucestershire Royal Hospital was urgently in need of not one but two extra foetal monitors.

Mothers "at risk" needed to be monitored in the ante-natal ward, but the only foetal monitor was in use in the labour room.

Consultant obstetrician Bob Hutcheson is proud of Gloucester's record of babies born alive and well, which is higher than the national average, but he wanted to improve on that — and he knew that extra machines were vital.

Derek Spackman, Chairman of the Gloucester Group, readily pledged its support: "I know there are literally hundreds of women in Gloucester who have cause to be grateful to Mr Hutcheson's unit for the safe delivery of their children.

"There are others who have handicapped children who



● **BABIES** born in Gloucester's Royal Hospital now have a better chance of escaping death and needless handicap by the presentation of two new foetal monitors. Here Nursing Officer Miss Frances Pye demonstrates one of them to Mr Derek Spackman, Chairman of the Gloucester Spastics Association (second right) and Gloucester sector administrator Mr Winston Tayler (right), and Mr Bob Hutcheson, consultant obstetrician.

Picture by The Citizen, Gloucester

might have been normal and healthy if the equipment had been available to them. The most critical time for these 'at risk' women is just before the birth and the foetal heart monitor keeps a constant visual check on them. At the

first sign of abnormality the doctors can take immediate steps to counteract it."

The Gloucester group swung into fund raising with energy, and a whole host of athletic sponsored activities such as jogging, walking and swim-

ming, to traditional events like coffee mornings and dances. As a result, Gloucestershire Royal Hospital has two new monitors each costing £2,500 and an even better chance of improving the city's healthy baby record.

## Busy days for our Chairman

**WHEN** you take on the Chairmanship of a national charity you not only need dedication and enthusiasm for the cause, but a great deal of stamina — not to mention being prepared to give up a great many of your own interests in order to devote most of your time to the organisation you serve in an entirely voluntary capacity.

Mrs Joyce Smith is the Chairman of The Spastics Society, and the demands of the office clearly emerged when Spastics News was talking to her at the end of the month about her programme for November. She obligingly looked through her diary to recount some of the meetings, events, conferences and activities that she had attended throughout the month, and did not seem to find the work load at all burdensome.

But Spastics News was amazed and doubted if readers realise how much effort is put in by the Society's Honorary Officers, not just our Chairman, but Vice Chairmen, Hon Treasurer, and members of the Executive Council.

## Diary

As an idea of Mrs Smith's month, here are some of the dates in her diary — certainly not all of them, but enough to give you a flavour.

On the 6th, there was the journey to Wales for the visit of Princess Anne to Craig-y-Parc School. On the 7th and 8th, there was the West Region weekend (Mrs Smith is also the very active Chairman of a local group in the region). The 10th, 11th and 12th, saw her in London again for a round of meetings including Habinteg, of which she is a committee member, and a meeting with all the Regional Chairmen; on the 14th and 15th, there was a post-AGM Executive Council seminar at Castle Priory, the Society's establishment at Wallingford, to discuss future strategy, and on the 16th the Stars Organisation for Spastics annual Ball.

## Crowded

The month proceeds on similar crowded lines, with engagements ranging from many, many meetings at Society HQ, to activities such as a visit to the Cheyne Centre for Spastic Children in Chelsea, and another to Winchester Spastics Shop to put up posters for the "Blue Peter" appeal.

In addition to all this, Mrs Smith sat in court as a JP, and attended meetings in the West Country connected with her work as governor of a Technical College, and member of the Area Health Committee and Community Health Council. She has, however, now resigned from her seat on the County Council and the District Council, because even a woman of energy like Joyce Smith is bounded by the same number of hours in the day as we lesser mortals!

## Boy's effort

**RAYMOND** Perrier, a 16-year-old schoolboy from King Edward VI School, Chelmsford, offered to help The Spastics Society with a house to house collection. He visited over 250 houses and collected £50.53, which Jenny Woods, appeals officer, describes as "a magnificent effort."



# Briefing...

on books, aids, holidays, services,  
to help you and your family

## Idea for wheelchair 'drivers'

THE special needs of wheelchair users for hand protection have been investigated by the Worshipful Company of Glovers as a charitable project. Now, after four years of development, Wheelies have been produced. Wheelies, available in a do-it-yourself kit, overcome many problems by using a new construction method. No sewing is needed to make them. They are assembled with a double thickness of leather over the main area of wear on the palm and simply glued together. This means that there are no rough spots or seams to wear out.

Wheelies are mitten gloves, similar in shape to the well-known Stoke Mandeville gloves, which leave the fingers and the tips of the thumbs free. They are made of light tan grain leather with a replaceable reinforcing patch of coloured suede across the palm and thumb, to give good wear and better grip. The glue is easily put on and is held closed by Velcro fastener across the back of the hand.

### Tested

Hands come in many different shapes and sizes, so Wheelies come in a do-it-yourself pack which contains everything needed, including instructions and a cut out card pattern to tailor them to individual hands.

Wheelchair users who have tested the Wheelies in nationwide trials and at the National Paraplegic games at Stoke Mandeville are pleased with the results.

The kits are currently available from Stoke Mandeville Stadium Shop or by post from: Wheelies, c/o Beakbane Limited, PO Box 10, Stourport Road, Kidderminster, Worcs DY11 7QT. Price £5.75.

## Abused children

CHILDREN who have suffered abuse and violence at the hands of adults present a problem when it comes to planning their long term future.

A two-day conference to explore these issues is to be held at The Spastics Society's Castle Priory College in Wallingford, Oxon, from Wednesday, January 7 to Friday, January 9, and will be of particular interest to paediatricians, child psychiatrists, psychologists, social work managers, field and residential social workers and members of the legal profession.

The course will provide an intensive two-day workshop using video and experimental techniques.

Applications to attend the course should be made to: The Principal, Mrs Joyce Knowles, Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxon. Tel Wallingford (0491) 37551. The tuition fee is £40 and the residential fee is £30. A few non-residential places will be available. Firm bookings should be accompanied by a non-refundable deposit of £11.20.

## 'Undeclared' Lin—her story of trials, tragedies, and triumphs

THE story of Lin Berwick's life starts with the harsh, dramatic and damning words: "Take her home. Forget about her. She will never be any good. You're wasting my time, your time and everybody else's."

The date was 1952 and the doctor who spoke these words to Lin's mother, is not named. One wonders what his reaction would be if he was to read "Undeclared," Lin's autobiography published by the Epworth Press.

For a blind, spastic, telephonist, Lin shows a rare flair for the written word. She says herself

she feels on an equal footing with people when it comes to print. Her style is articulate without being verbose, moving without being sentimental, informative without being didactic.

She traces her life from her arrival in this world as a 2lb 4oz baby on March 18, 1950, whom no one expected to live, to fitting in radio programmes between her job as a telephonist with the Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia, and an operation for the removal of an eye.

It is a humorous book with a poignant side. Lin herself has confessed that when she came to write about the time she lost her eyesight as a teenager she found it

almost impossible because of the painful memories it recalled. The actual eye removal came much later by which time Lin was already an independent adult. She takes us step by step through the preparations for her innumerable operations, her reactions to them and does it so tellingly that the reader "feels" her fear, distress and despair. This evocative gift conveys so accurately how Lin felt that it could almost be a text-book lesson for doctors and nurses on patients' feelings.

She recounts her struggles without self-pity although it must have required herculean strength to overcome them and pays tribute to the family and friends who helped her. Trials, tragedies and troubles aren't the whole story though — there are triumphs too and Lin's indomitable spirit shines through.

It is a funny book, a bright book and one that will give pleasure through both story line and style. If it was a novel it would end with the heroine being showered with gifts. Instead it is the readers who are left feeling they have received one.



## Word power on screen for Possum people

POSSUM Controls have announced a full text processing facility which can either be supplied as a complete unit or an add-on facility to most existing typewriter systems. When added to a standard system a vastly increased range of facilities are available, opening whole new horizons for the severely handicapped in educational and employment fields.

The most important extra facility is the ability to pre-compose a text onto a television screen. This text can be corrected, edited, have words, sentences or paragraphs inserted, and then when all correct, the typewriter can be instructed to produce a written copy.

In order to speed up the composition of text onto the television screen a list of some 40 frequently used words, and a lexicon are used. The lexicon is a list of 800 words

and phrases arranged in alphabetical order using 26 pages any of which can be called onto the television screen, and a word or phrase selected for entry on the screen of text being created.

For the first time, it is possible to give severely handicapped people the ability to use graphics. Using a memory of graphic symbols, drawings and sketches can be made for pleasure or for business purposes.

In order to speed the learning of the words that are available in the list or lexicon, a TV game called "Hangman" provides a mentally stimulating game on the display unit.

A full programmable calculator facility is available as an option on this system which has obvious potential for education and employment.

Full details from Possum Controls Ltd, Middlegreen Trading Estate, Middlegreen Road, Slough, Berks SL3 6BX.

## Six tell of living and coping

LOOKING after themselves in the comfort of their own home is a natural way of life for the able bodied. But for the handicapped it's not that easy. They must learn not only to cope with everyday chores such as cooking, cleaning and washing, but how to gain maximum independence and be accepted into the community.

"Room for Manoeuvre" is a thought-provoking film about the accommodation and care of severely handicapped people. It shows six severely handicapped people talking about the way they live, how they cope in their homes, and their desire to lead normal lives as far as possible.

Sponsored jointly by the National Building Agency and Crossroads Care Attend-

ant Scheme Trust, "Room For Manoeuvre," catalogue number UK 3427, is in 16mm colour film with optical sound and runs for 29 minutes. It is also available in certain videocassette formats on request. It can be hired from the Central Film Library for £8.50 plus VAT.

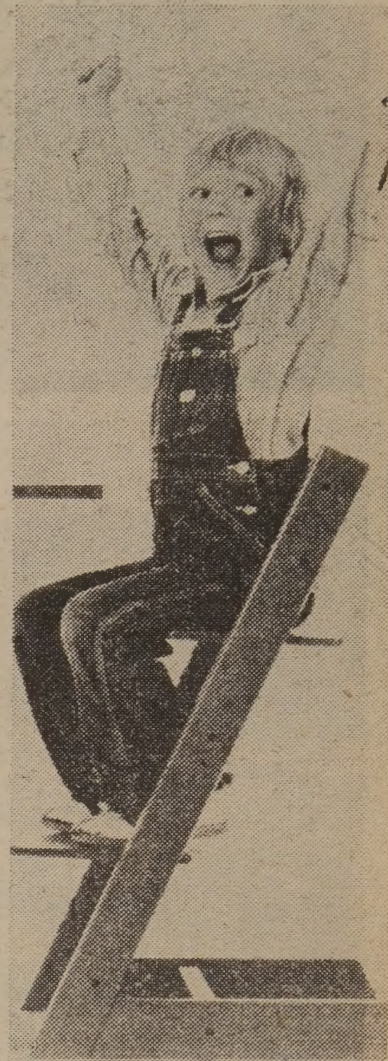
Inquiries to Central Film Library at Bromyard Avenue, London W3 7JB, 01-743 5555.

## New chair will 'grow up' with the child

IN addition to its famous range of powered and manual wheelchairs and aids for the disabled, Newton Aids exhibited for the first time at Naides the Tripp Trapp Chair and "Shell" wheelchair system.

The Tripp Trapp chair from Norway provides simple height adjustments. This ensures that the child sits comfortably and correctly at the dining/work height; the chair which "grows with the child." Of modern design and sturdy construction, the Tripp Trapp is available in red, brown or polished natural wood, priced at £39.

Latest in wheelchair design from Holland comes the "Shell" seating system. Based on a fibre glass shell, the chair has adjustable posture control padding under removable fabric or waterproof covers. The "Shell," which is available in 4 sizes, converts easily for car seating and is also adaptable to other chassis.



## Help with finding a holiday home from home

ADHOX is the name of a unique adapted housing exchange agency borne out of a £12 phone bill and the aggravation a multiple sclerosis victim suffered trying to go on holiday.

Chris Hazelgrove is a 44-year-old social worker whose condition was diagnosed last year although its onset was some 10 years earlier. This year she felt like a holiday and found it almost an impossibility.

"I was ringing all over the country checking details to find out if accommodation would be suitable, and it was so difficult. One hotel assured me that there were only six steps to the bedroom and the toilet was on the same floor.

"It seemed ideal and I sent off a £10 deposit. With the receipt they sent their brochure, on which someone had added — 'by the way we forgot to mention there are 27 steps up to the front door...'"

"Fortunately I got my deposit back."

Realising that there were

others in exactly the same position, coupled with the fact that as a social worker she often dealt with families who told her that they would like to go away with handicapped members as a family group, gave her the idea of Adhox.

Basically she is compiling a register of homes already adapted for the disabled. Her husband, Peter, a printer did the artwork for her, and produced an "Offer" and a "Wants" sheet.

On one is listed every possible descriptive detail:

what kind of a home, and what kind of adaptations have been made, while the "wants" lists all likely requirements, from ripple beds to volt battery chargers.

All information is strictly confidential and as Adhox's Director, Chris will match up subscribers to the best of her ability.

Anyone interested in registering with Adhox, the adapted homes exchange agency, should contact her at 2 Mill Lane, Abbots Worthy, Winchester, Hants or ring 0962-882328 after 6 pm.

## Choosing the right toys this Christmas

IN time for Christmas — the first general consumer guidebook to toys has been published. The Good Toy Guide, compiled by the Toy Libraries Association, recommends over 900 toys.

These 900 have been approved from thousands assessed by this independent charity over the last few years. They have been approved by the Toy Libraries Association panel of child specialists for their play value, durability and functional and developmental qualities.

Each entry in The Good Toy Guide includes a description of the toy and a note of the manufacturer and approximate price. Some toys are

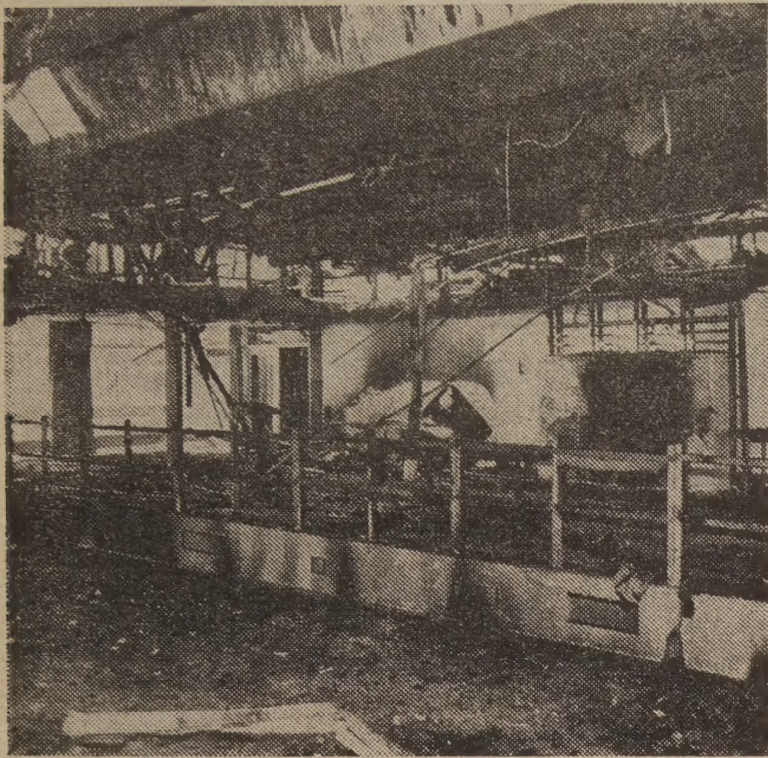
picked out as "highly recommended." The book is divided into sections from A for Activity to F for Fun and Games. Additional short sections give general advice on how to buy toys wisely and on toys and the handicapped.

As the only consumer guidebook, to toys in Britain, The Good Toy Guide is itself invaluable for those choosing toys for Christmas, and at £2.95 is cheaper than many toys.

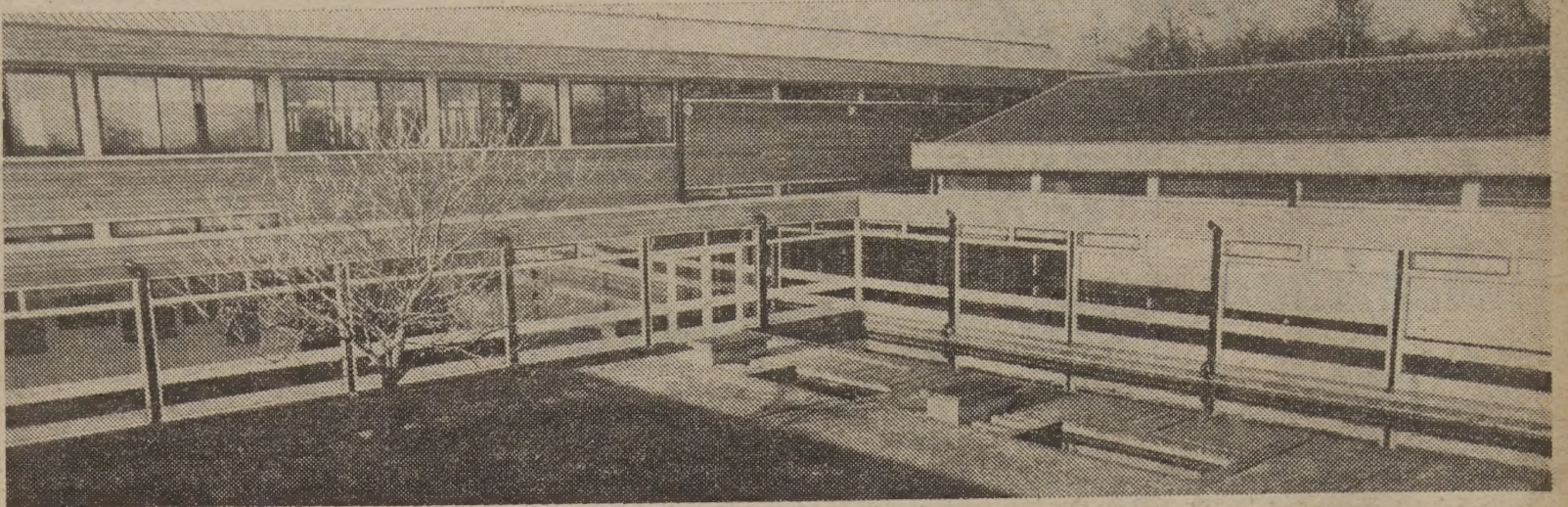
The guide is published by Inter - Action Imprint with the Toy Libraries Association. Copies are available from bookshops or by sending £2.95 plus 35p for p and p to Toy Libraries Association, Seabrook House, Potters Bar, Herts.



## From fire havoc



## to restoration of a school



● LEFT: This was the scene of devastation after the arsonist had struck at the Thomas Delarue School. Right: Two years and more than £½m later, the block rebuilt. The cost was met through insurance cover with the Society putting in some money.

## Phoenix has risen from the ashes

### —and it's better than ever

AS a young architect nearly 20 years ago, Colin Smart was asked to design the Society's first purpose-built school, Thomas Delarue, at Tonbridge in Kent, and in 1964 the school won a Civic Trust Award.

Tragically a lot of his work was destroyed when an arsonist struck in August 1978.

Colin, who had originally worked for a firm used by the Society before becoming the Society's own architect for five years, had set up in partnership with another architect after spending a number of years in Jamaica as Director of Educational Projects.

And it was architects Penton and Smart that the Society contacted about the rebuilding of the school.

"I must say it was lovely to get a second bite at the cherry," said Colin, "and be able to bring the building 20 years forward. At the same time there were difficulties because the school had to be kept running."

"It was a very difficult job from the construction point of view and the contractors were marvellous, trying to cause as little disturbance to the children as possible. I must say the children were excellent



● COLIN Smart, the man responsible for the new building rising out of the ashes of the old, with the dramatic Phoenix collage created by the children to mark their school's re-birth.

clerks of works — as soon as I appeared they would tell me exactly what had been done."

Rebuilding the gutted block — the fire started in the upper storey containing staff rooms, library and dining room which then collapsed into the pupils' dining room and the main hall — has cost over £600,000.

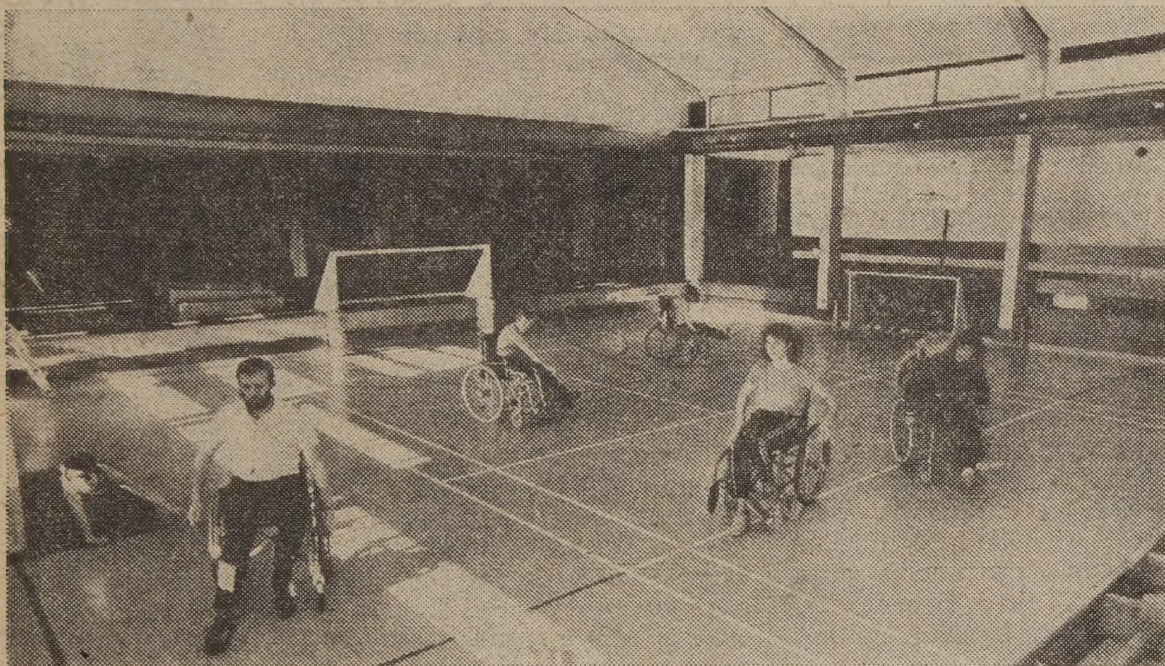
"The fire gave us an opportunity to extend," said Colin. "For instance the hall is bigger — high enough to play badminton in, and longer. The pupils' dining and common rooms are wider and we've put a special lighting booth so pupils can control the lights

on stage during productions." The arsonist was never caught.

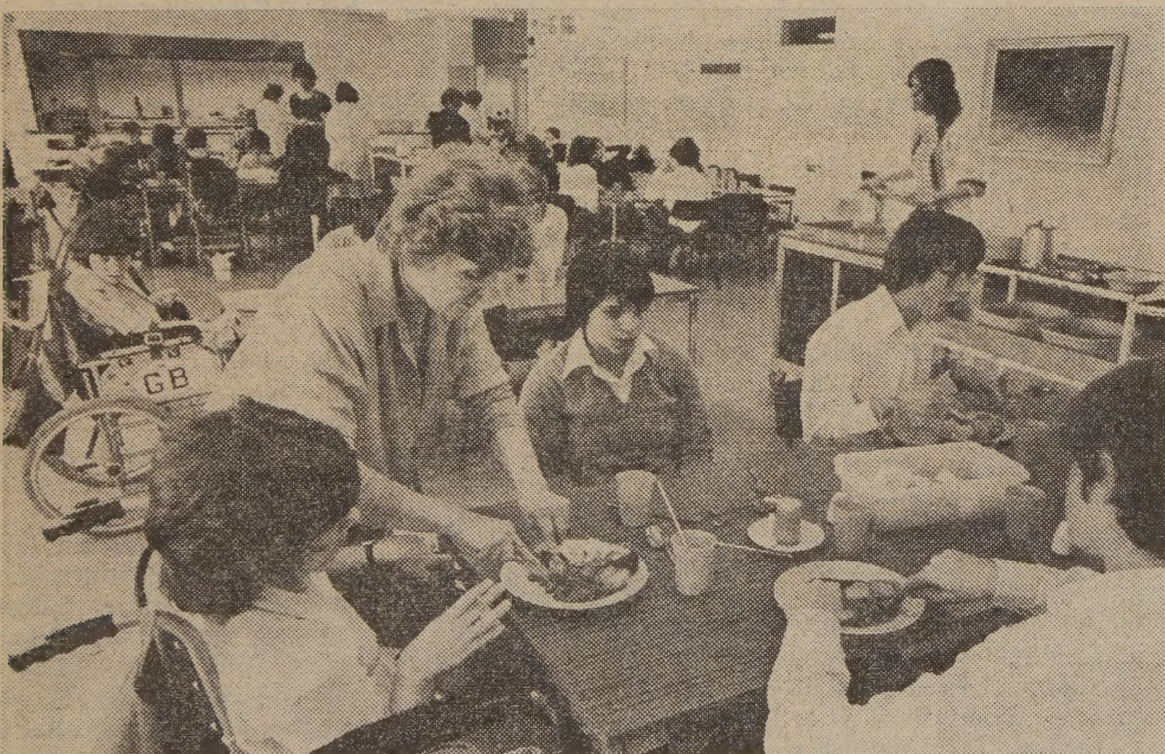
### 'Clan' cheque

THE "McGeordie Clan," a group of Scotsmen and their friends living in Durham, collected £170 for the Sunderland Spastics Society. The cheque was piped into the bar of the Golden Lion in Durham, and received on behalf of the group by Mr Robert Cooper.

Earlier in the evening Mr Cooper had received a cheque for £350 from the Fence Houses and District Darts League.



● HERE Tim Rogers, PE instructor, and Angela Peck, Community Services Volunteer, take on the 2nd form in a game of wheelchair football in the new hall.



● THE smell of burnt debris and bricks and mortar have been replaced with the appetising aroma of roast beef in the students' new and enlarged dining room.

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## 'Blue Peter' appeal

Continued from page 1

provide two neo-natal cots for intensive care units — the Short report recommended that the number of these should be increased because it is proved that they reduce handicap and death but the Government is unlikely to respond.

"By providing cots at hospitals in Newcastle and Birmingham, both of which have worse than average perinatal rates, the nation's children led by Blue Peter and the Society are showing government the way.

"It is all tremendously good news for the Society and the cerebral palsied in general. I believe that the Society was chosen to administer the appeal because it is recognised as the leading national charity and everyone working for the Society can feel they have directly contributed to the programme's choice of cause."

Every day thousands of letters are being received at Society headquarters asking for the "Great Blue Peter Bring and Buy Kits" and Tim admitted: "It has required a tremendous

amount of organisation to turn the letters round and send out the kits in 24 hours."

The Society's 100 shops are also part of the co-ordinated plan and John Tough, Head of Marketing appealed: "Is there any landlord in the Birmingham area who could make vacant premises available to us while the Blue Peter appeal is in progress? We are also looking for volunteers to help out in the shops."

The Appeal will continue until the target figure has been reached.

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